ANNUAL REPORT
2012

Prepared by:
Mr. Afonso Castro
National Director
SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE ANGOLA
afonso.castro@aldeiasosangola.org

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### SECTION ONE: ANNUAL REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1 Summary of SOS Children’s Village Work in Angola in 2012</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Overview of the socio-economic conditions in the country</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2 National Association’s response to the conditions in the country</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Time Schedule of Major Events for 2013

#### SECTION TWO: FACILITY REPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.1 Lubango</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 SOS Children’s Village</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 SOS Youth Facilities</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 SOS Kindergarten</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 Hermann Gmeiner Primary School</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 SOS Clinic</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6 Family Strengthening Programme</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2 Benguela</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 SOS Children’s Village</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 SOS Kindergarten</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Hermann Gmeiner Primary School</td>
<td>15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 Medical Centre</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5 Family Strengthening Programme</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3 Huambo</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Huambo CV project</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 SOS Kindergarten</td>
<td>18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 SOS-Cambiote Primary School</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 Family Strengthening Programme</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SECTION THREE: STATISTICS SUMMARY
SECTION ONE

ANNUAL REPORT
1.1 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE IN ANGOLA IN 2012

1.1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

Angola’s economic prospects remain positive and its real gross domestic product (GDP) growth is expected to expand to 8.2% in 2013. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in 2012, inflation remained on a downward trend of 10%, but vulnerable to rising food prices. High import dependency and rising global food prices threaten to reverse the downward inflation trend of the last couple of years. Despite steady progress in improving social conditions since the end of the war in 2002, the country continues to face daunting challenges on the social sector. As a response, the government continues to allocate more than 30% of its budget to social spending. Despite the efforts, Angola remains one of the poorest countries in Africa with an estimated 68% of the population living in poverty and 26% living below poverty line. Women and children, much more receptive to the consequences of poverty, suffer every day from the related problems (malnutrition, lack of water, health…). Malaria continue being the number one killer in Angola, despite dropping by 400,000 cases countrywide followed by road traffic accidents as the second leading cause. With regard to HIV/AIDS, Angola is at a critical point in its fight against the epidemic. UNAIDS and the Angolan AIDS control program estimated adult prevalence at below 4%. Nearly 70% of the population in Angola is under the age of 24. A knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) survey conducted among people aged 14 to 24 showed 43% of young people had had sex by the age of 15, one of the highest rates in the world. With lack of knowledge and access to preventive measures Angola has all conditions that leave the country ripe for a spike in HIV.

There is a realization of Angola's rapidly growing economy requiring better-educated workforce to raise the competitiveness of Angolan businesses and improve professionalism. Many of schools are being rebuilt countrywide, curriculums are being revised, and teachers are receiving good-quality training. This process will ensure the success of Angola’s future leaders. There is a consciousness however that it will take time before Angolans have the education system they deserve as the quality of the education system remains very poor and still characterized by overcrowded or multi-age classrooms, teacher shortages and inadequate learning materials and infrastructure. An early pregnancy is identified in the State reports as a causal factor in early dropout rates of girls in education.
1.1.2 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION’S RESPONSE TO THE CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

Family Based Care

Children within SOS families: the Family Based Care in Lubango and Benguela maintained operations at full capacity and with few possibilities for expansion, given the current funding uncertainty. New additions were only possible in the SOS Children’s Village in Huambo as part of its normal and supported development process which allowed for a long-term family environment to be provided for 36 new children. The expectations are for the Huambo program to reach the maximum capacity of 120 children by the end of 2013. As typical, the child admission process continues to unveil shocking realities concerning the widespread neglect children are subject to before admission with serious effects on their physical and emotional condition. The good care provided in the village continues to radically save lives. After few months on our care the children become stable, healthy and are enabled to live as full a life as possible, making our mother to become real specialists in dealing with the neglected child.

Youth within the programme: Our existing youth development program hosted and serviced 41 youths in the youth facility in Lubango. The program sought to improve youth by meeting their basic physical, developmental, and social needs and by helping them to build the competencies needed to stand high chances in the employment market thus becoming successful adults. As a result, 6 youths completed a vocational course on civil construction. Enrolment in tertiary education increased from 8 youths in 2011 to 15 in 2012 (including new international students in Swaziland, Namibia, South Africa, Brazil and USA). All education efforts have also resulted in Juvenile delinquency to remain at 0%. However, our reasonable competency program did not unfortunately remove our youth from all problem risks. In spite of all the empowerment for the youth to be able to take the right decisions in life, this year, another 3 youths have entered into early pregnancy forcing an anticipated but well supported reintegration of the affected youth in the community. Success with the youth program continues to be encouraging though after 9 new youth became totally independent and active members of society in 2012.

Family Strengthening (FS)

Children within families of origin: Due to the financial uncertainty, a decision was taken for the admission of additional beneficiaries to remain unfrozen for the Lubango and the Benguela program. However, having been clarified the funding possibilities for the Huambo program, 45 new beneficiaries were added to FS Huambo making the national program to end the year 2012 with a total children beneficiary number of 875, assisted within the Family Strengthening interventions in the provinces of Lubango (465), Benguela (212) and Huambo (198).

In general, the focus in the program continued to be the reinforcement of the quality standards through extensive evaluations. Activities in this area have resulted in the exit of 61 families from the Lubango program (46 for attaining satisfactory self-sufficiency levels, 6 due to lack of collaboration, 6 for moving to locations outside the programme range and 3 for being outside the target group). New admission in Lubango focussed exclusively on vulnerable families with children at risk of following into abandonment in which single women headed households represent more than 90% of the admitted families.
Despite the long struggle to capacitate Community Based Organisations, the Benguela program made a remarkable step in mobilising partners to achieve common goals. To achieve the goal of community empowerment and self-reliance among beneficiary families, the program entered into a formal partnership agreement with ODEBRECHT, a Brazilian corporate in the engineering and construction business, that became a funding implementation partner in the management of a social centre in Kawango, a community where the family strengthening program is established. Through this partnership beneficiary families and children are being impacted with life skills and income-generating training.

**Education**

In terms of school enrollment in formal education, we continue to celebrate 100% achievement among all our Family Based Care children beneficiaries with a growing number of youth reaching even tertiary education. Statistics from the national Family Strengthening however show 70 beneficiaries in Lubango and 15 in Huambo still outside the school system. These children and youngsters are all from the newly admitted families whose right of education have been violated. Advocacy activities were initiated aiming to rapidly attend to the children development needs. Activities include the identification of suitable vocational training alternatives for the young people who completely missed the appropriate school enrolment age and provision of birth certificates to secure places in any local school.

For children on preschool age benefiting from our support, the general assessment is frequently quoted to show the potential benefits of the early education provided in SOS education facilities. Children who participate in our preschool education continue to show better achievement (higher reading, math and literacy scores) and better school adjustment than the average children coming from home straight to the mainstream school system.

Although the passing rate in our schools is rated above 65% nationally, there is a growing worry that large and heterogeneous classes, driven by the influx of poor academically stimulated students is leading to a slight decline in the quality of education. Some low levels of reading proficiency found among our programm beneficiaries suggest that learning might have been compromised. Therefore, teachers’ workshops held in all SOS schools are focusing in improving teaching methods to suit students’ level. Parents are also continuously being encouraged to participate more in their children’s education by providing them with better information on the school system, including information on basic ways in which they can supervise and stimulate learning at home.
Our efforts to boost local income through fundraising fell 69% in 2012, from $234,000 in 2011 to just $73,000 last year. This sharp decline may be explained from our inability to convert the single donors recruited in 2011 into committed givers as well as the little consideration we gave fundraising as just part of our work and not necessarily the crucial part of it. The lack of adequate budget to attract and retain qualified fundraisers as well as the extremely low investment to enable aggressive cultivation campaigns before asking are just some examples of what we still need to do to have greater impact.

Although the response rate was a bit low in this first stage, perhaps one of the great sensations in fund development was the street campaigns organized nationally. This marked the begging of SOS Angola stopping taking the easy way by avoiding the in-person asks. A partnership was formed with the scout movement to help us conduct this face-to-face activity. SOS staff joined by our young external partners, wearing our branded vests and holding clipboards, were engaged on the street, knocking on doors and briefing the public on the work we do and asking people to sign up to become monthly donors.

**Implement Effective Performance Management Systems Across the Association:** A review on our performance management system indicated that the Association is progressing well at communicating clear job performance expectations and evaluating job performance. Nearly 70% of staff at senior and middle management level reported that they have a current job description with clear performance expectations and more than 70% agreed that their performance is reviewed annually by their supervisor. However, the majority of staff is not discussing employee development or career goals on a regular basis. Only 5% of staff reported using individual development plans. To build upon supervisory support for staff development, annual reviews should include a discussion about a staff member’s individual development plan, outlining specific development goals for the year.

**Leadership Development:** Facility and program heads are currently the most underserved population in the area of leadership development. Often they come to their positions without prior experience leading people or managing departments. Lack of schools specialized in leadership and management training coupled with the language barrier are cited as the chief impediments for the development of this particular group. To overcome this difficulty we have embarked on a knowledge transfer program where the 4 senior leaders who participated in regionally organized leadership courses are used as facilitators for key topics discussions during the national management forums. There is actually a common understanding that leadership development must be a high priority. We therefore made substantial provision in our 2013 budget for leadership development as a necessary investment in our employees. Opportunities for leadership development were also provided in the form of (i) stretch assignments (involving 2 national coordinators: one as brand champion and the other as a strategic objective leader); (ii) committee/task force service (involving 2 national coordinators); (iii) regional leadership development programs (involving 1 village director, 1 facility head, 1 national coordinator and the national director).
Core care co-worker and general staff turnover: The core care co-worker turnover remains relatively low in the Association (2.7%) just below our forecast of 3% for 2012. Unfortunately employment contracts had to be terminated with two SOS mothers (Huambo and Benguela) and one Family Strengthening Assistant in Huambo. With regard to the general staff, the rate at which SOS Angola is losing co-workers is becoming a very serious concern. 16 resignations were registered in 2012. The exit interviews indicate that employees are generally not satisfied with the low remuneration competitiveness after the tremendous salary increases in the public sector over the last 3 years. In order to prevent staff changes to become very harmful to the organization SOS Angola continues to conduct structured orientation program to ensure that new co-workers replacing skilled ones are easily settled into the organization and in their job. However, the added challenge continues to rest in our inability to attract the average qualified candidate due to our low competitiveness in the employment market. At least 5 key positions remained vacant for prolonged periods of the year due to consecutive failures on our recruitment processes.
### TIME SCHEDULE OF MAJOR EVENTS FOR 2013

| **JANUARY** | Submit the twelve month impact report to the Western Union Foundation  
NA finance capacity building program in Namibia |
| **FEBRUARY** | National Coordinators’ meeting  
Beginning of new school year  
Telling our story workshop |
| **MARCH** | 1st Quarterly Board meeting  
The SOS mother day  
Performance appraisal of National Coordinators and Village Directors  
National Director Visit to Benguela and Huambo  
National Director’s self-appraisal and draft work plan to the RD |
| **APRIL** | Easter village celebrations  
2012 Audit Process  
Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director  
1st Strategic Planning Review  
National Director participates in the Regional meeting  
National sponsorship secretary workshop in Lubango  
National Coordinators’ meeting |
| **MAY** | Regional Director Visit to SOS Angola  
Regional Principals’ meeting  
National Fundraising Workshop |
| **JUNE** | National Association Planning Process  
2nd Quarterly Report deadline  
2nd Quarterly Board meeting |
| **JULY** | National management team meeting  
Management and Leadership Development programme and Facility Heads in Lubango  
National Coordinators’ meeting  
RO Program Development support visit to Angola  
Regional CVPP Implementation workshop |
| **SEPTEMBER** | 3rd Quarterly Report deadline  
Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director  
3rd Quarterly Board meeting  
NA Plans and Budgets to Regional Office |
| **OCTOBER** | National Director Visit to Benguela and Huambo  
Child &Youth Development Team workshop |
| **NOVEMBER** | Performance review sessions with the national leadership staff  
Regional Internal Audit  
National Coordinators’ meeting  
Sponsorship Facility Reports and Child Christmas Cards deadline |
| **DECEMBER** | End of year statistics to RO Deadline  
Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director |
SECTION THREE

FACILITY REPORTS
SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, LUBANGO

The SOS Children’s Village’s family houses in Lubango are frequently referred as being above the average community standard due to its privileged view with surrounding mountains and for the quality of its infrastructure. Without being too defensive on this we can just claim that it is in fact a nice place for a child to grow, not just for the quality of the facilities but mainly for the hope and second change many children without parental care are having to grow in family environment where their survival and development needs met by professional caregivers. In 2012, 63 boys and 65 girls continued to enjoy a permanent home in the Village. The Village routine starts very early in the morning with the village mother helping 9-10 children getting ready to school. Children return home from school at about 13H00 where a delicious hot meal awaits them. The afternoon is generally spent with children being engaged in three main activities namely, doing household chores, play and complete the school homework. As mother Filomena says, “It’s not an easy job to look after so many children but it is very rewarding to see children growing and succeed at school”.

A close look at the physical and academic conditions of our children in the Village revealed a great deal of stability health wise but some concerns over the academic performance. The school passing rate among children from the SOS families was 65.9 % in 2012 which represents a slight decline from last year's figure. As informed, this slight decline is due to the level of complexity in some subjects and lack of adequate support in various high schools attended by our children. An educational extra support will be launched in 2013 to address the current passing rate issue.

Interesting indeed was to see many SOS mothers wanting to be more involved in supporting their children academically but finding themselves unable to provide adequate support to high school going children given their level of education (statistics show that 80% of our mothers in Lubango are below grade 8). To overcome this difficulty and as part of our mother empowerment plans, a special adult education program was approved and supported by the department of education and implemented in the Herman Gmeiner Primary School in 2012 aiming to get the first group of mothers conclude grade 9 in 2014 and be ready to enroll adult high school education outside SOS education facilities thereafter. It should be noted that 10 mothers already attended and successfully completed a cooking and decoration course facilitated by a professional service provider locally.

SOS YOUTH FACILITIES, LUBANGO

Our youth are not exempted from the problems affecting youth today. The youth programme in Lubango tried very hard to ensure our 41 youths beneficiaries to be healthy and equipped with the competencies needed to take the right decisions in life and stand high changes in the employment market. Early pregnancy continues to be a depressing factor among the very conservative SOS family. However, the following facts leave us extremely proud. No single case of youth delinquency has been registered over the years of the programme existence. All the youth are engaged in self-development activities, both academic and vocational studies. 36% of our youth are enrolled in various universities locally, regionally and in overseas. Last but definitely not least is the fact of 9 youths becoming totally independent in 2012. Two youths became engaged and formally married their young responsible partners in very touching public ceremonies. The remaining 7 managed to secure stables jobs within the Angolan middle class income and completely became independent. Among them we would particularly like to refer to Ana Seza, a 23 years’ old qualified nurse, who completed university in the field of clinical psychology and moved to a nearby province to take on a job offer. Ana came back to the SOS Village 4 months after her employment to bring a small thank you gift she bought with her first salary to all SOS staff members that had an input in her development. Two co-workers literally cried when they read the caring words she attached to the gifts.
**SOS KINDERGARTEN, LUBANGO**

The SOS Kindergarten continues to make a positive impact in the community in general and in the SOS programme beneficiaries in particular. In 2012, 132 children were served with a preschool program to facilitate their transition from home to school. This time, a very special attention was devoted to the preparation year in the Kindergarten following a realization that teachers were increasingly focussing on academics for this particular group of children. As a support, we ensured that our teachers attended a fruitful workshop organised by the department of education for all Kindergartens in the province in which the importance of play was once again emphasized. Participants reinforced the knowledge of play not only as a stress-reliever but also as a critical way that children develop language, express their creativity, expand their social skills, solve problems and generally learn about their world — all important abilities that help them in kindergarten and well beyond. Additional precautions were also taken this year for classes to be limited to twenty five children per teacher as opposite to thirty to assure children get the maximum attention and develop a sense of mastery and confidence more easily. This year 25 prep children smoothly moved to Year 1 in the school. In a colourful “graduation day” the formally dressed children, in the company of their parents and teachers, were awarded certificates of successfully completion of the KG program.

**SOS HERMANN GMEINER PRIMARY SCHOOL, LUBANGO**

The School was always referred as a model school for giving priority to the most underprivileged (with 132 program children and 377 subsidized ones from the deprived community) and for the acceptable quality of education it offers to the community members, judged from the well maintained facilities and the good passing rate, which reached 81.9 % in 2012. The school recognition from the state authorities is visible from the financial support we receive towards teachers’ salaries and from sporadic donation of school material. Notwithstanding the achievements, the management is fully aware that the education strategy however cannot be achieved by SOS Children’s Villages on its own, but needs a rooting within the local/national education strategy with local/national education stakeholders as this also ensures that funding is not only possible by public but also by private actors. In 2012, the SOS Children’s Villages continued to strive to forge alliances and partnerships on national and international level. These efforts led us to the Western Union Foundation, a credible international actor that was invited to join the SOS Angola efforts in the provision of a free and quality education to enable our target children group to claim their rights and to develop to their full potential. Western Union gladly sponsored a capital project to improve the quality of our education by helping us develop a culture of reading among students in our school through the establishment of a functional school library. Construction and equipping of the library was concluded within schedule and the library was officially opened in September 2012. This was preceded by a capacity building workshop in which 30 primary school teachers could share and improve their reading instruction. 280 children from grade 1 to grade 4 are participating in activities including ICT integration strategies to enhance their reading competence. Now, one of the reasons for children not to miss school is the opportunity they have every day to read their infant friendly reading books and their engagement in post-reading activity discussions in the library. Trying out play activities in the computer is also the great sensation.
SOS CLINIC, LUBANGO

The SOS Clinic in Lubango continues to follow a rural health program intended to increase primary care services for the SOS program beneficiaries and for the under-served patients from the surrounding communities with particular attention to women, children and the elderly people. We are a recognized non-profit clinic using one part-time physician from the state, a senior long serving SOS nurse and one junior government nurse practitioner. The staff provides diagnostic and therapeutic services. The clinic is not able to provide laboratory tests except the undertaking of basic pregnancy and glycaemia tests.

In 2012 the clinic supported the sex education program offered in the Herman Gmeiner School and in the youth program. The staff helped covering topics on sexuality and reproduction. Participants discussed openly all sort of behaviours that have to do with an individual as a sexual being and offered sex education is in the form of HIV education. In particular, the HIV prevention program and regular services offered an invaluable opportunity to provide youth with the knowledge and skills needed to address a range of reproductive health issues, including pregnancy prevention.

Malaria represents a huge burden for the health care services across Angola. A total of nearly 4,000 outpatients visited the clinic in 2012, of which 30.5% had malaria. Children accounted for almost half of the total malaria cases. The clinic staff continues to monitor its mosquito control programme through regular visits to the SOS Village family houses and its affiliated facilities.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, LUBANGO

Preventing child abandonment through community and family capacity building has been a great challenge for the program in Lubango over the years. The widespread poverty that mainly affects women and children coupled with difficulties to form key networks and strong partnerships in the community are cited as key impediments for a rapid family development and smooth service delivery to children beneficiaries. In 2012 the program serviced 465 beneficiaries coming from 113 families most of whom recently admitted, after 61 families were exited from the program for attaining satisfactory self-sufficiency levels (46 families), for the lack of collaboration (6 families), for moving to locations outside the programme range (6 families) and for being outside the target group (3 families). Despite the long struggle to move families to satisfactory self-sufficiency levels, the program in Lubango could finally celebrate success with the 61 exited families whose developments milestones can be better illustrated from the Lovenda family success story bellow.

Mrs Lovenda became a widow after the passing away of her husband in 2010, leaving her unemployed and with no support to look after her 6 orphaned children. She clearly fell within the most vulnerable criteria as defined by the program admission committee and was put under emergency support services as agreed within her development plan for the family to access building material for shelter improvement as well as food parcels and clothing for the children. As part of the same plan, Mrs Lovenda requested financial support to improve her informal selling business further. This was granted in form an interest-free cash loan worth $100. An evaluation of Mrs Lovenda family 4 years after her admission reveals how crucial the programme input was to keep the children within the family with their survival and development needs met. Her modest doweling no longer poses threat to the children's lives as it was rehabilitated. Adequate advocacy ensured children's birth documents to be rapidly issued allowing them to secure a place in a local public school where their text and exercise books are given for free. Mrs. Lovenda retailing business of selling different consumable items in the informal market grew well enough to enable her return the loan and ensure at least 3 hot meals a day for the family.
SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, BENGUELA

The 13-family house Benguela Village continues to operate at its maximum capacity of 128 children. The child and youth development committee is currently challenged with the designing of programmes tailored to meet the specific development needs and aspirations of our children, as stated in their individual plans. This is mainly due to the unavailability of enough specialised services for our special needs children as well as the lack of diversified vocational training institutions in the community. Child development is also hampered by unexpected circumstances around our children. One case of adolescent pregnancy this year left the SOS family sad and disappointed after all efforts made with sexual education in the Village. The adolescent girl involved had to be reunified with a suitable biological relative who was willing to accommodate her, under the commitment on the side of SOS Benguela to continue supporting her through our Family Strengthening Programme, given the social difficulties in the new family environment and the desertion of the boyfriend.

Two staff flats were converted to support our child development further as well as respond to the continuous demand for a permanent SOS family among needy children in the community. This has generated 14 new places in the family houses after 9 young boys and 5 young ladies were moved to the converted building. Although this is in fact a new youth programme that was created, the converted flats are not yet officially considered as a youth facility due to our failure to follow the required yet exhaustive programme planning which resulted in an unapproved funds to run the programme. Youth in the converted houses are therefore catered for through the normal Village running costs as if they were still living in the family houses although they are already under a youth semi-independent living programme. In the middle of the current funding uncertainty we found wiser to freeze new child admissions in the Village. The filling of the created space will be explored during the 2013 planning and budgeting.

Benguela presents one of the most comprehensive child development programmes in Angola with very many young adolescents in the Village acquiring various technical/vocational skills they will need to succeed in life apart from the normal academics they regularly attend in our school. In the same way, the practice of sports is also being promoted with a well-supported football practice in the Village for both the girls and the boys. A small 12 computer lab sponsored by a local prominent insurance company has become the greatest attraction for the adolescents of both the Village and our children from families of origin in the community. With the supervision from the resident CYDC children frequently use the IT room for leisure and for investigative activities. In terms of academic performance, 46 children (30 children from the Village and 16 from the Family Strengthening) were identified as struggling to cope with Maths and Literacy. This led the team to organise a structured extra academic support programme supervised by a teacher from the Hermann Gmeiner School where the said difficulties are being remedied by first teaching them the required basic literacy needs and some fundamental mathematical operations. Likewise, the Benguela team is being pushed to start supporting the identified academically talented children so that they can enjoy the same privileges their bothers are having in Lubango of accessing privileged education outside the country.
SOS KINDERGARTEN, BENGUELA

An assessment to the kindergarten program in Benguela was conducted last year revelling critical development areas. Although activities can in fact stimulate growth and development of the children, the program however was found to be too formal and too academic. The limited funds in 2012 did not allow to tackle all that was needed to change the circumstances but a small investment was possible in some playrooms for it to look less like rooms for older children. The focus was in interest areas, such as blocks, dramatic play props and toys that were fewer and almost non-existent. Teaching approach on the other hand showed limited opportunities for children to make choices but more teacher-directed activities with children required to sit and complete paper and pencil tasks for long periods of time. This meant a professional training was also required. An opportunity arose in the first trimester from a sponsored kindergarten teacher training course provided by the college of education in Benguela. The kindergarten managed to secure places for 2 senior teachers who are expected to run workshops to cascade the knowledge onto the others.

The Kindergarten team is also not proud of their programme to support the physical development of the children. Concerns are mainly around the apparent inappropriate and inadequate steel jungle gym that does not seem to effectively support children’s mental and physical growth. Colleagues in Huambo who managed to build a much more efficient wooden gym were called upon to support and funding possibilities will be explored.

Despite the challenges above the SOS Kindergarten in Benguela continues to be highly preferred by the community members given the almost nonexistence of similar programs in the province that can accommodate children from the low income families. 104 children are currently being serviced, from which 20 are from the FSP and 10 from the FBC. In addition, we continue to register positive remarks from grade 1 teachers in the Herman Gmeiner School over the exceptional school readiness on the side of ex-kindergarten students.

The Kindergarten team is also proud of their ability to explore varied opportunities that works to strengthen children’s social and emotionally. Their success in this area is told from the little Andre Domingos story. He is a 5 years old boy living in the SOS Children’s Village. Fabio, as he is well known, was admitted in a SOS family when he was 1 years old. He became a concern to the team giving his severe introverted and shy nature. With the participation of his SOS family, the team managed to understand Fabio on the reasons preventing him from getting involved in group activities and on his personal preferences. As support, he used to be frequently called upon to share his good achievements and work with his peers. His gradual involvement in problem solving activities also helped him to “open up”. He suddenly became very excited in activities where the class was gathered for discussions about a topic they were studying and over the last two years he became well-adjusted and socializing well with other children. It also unveiled his academic potential. Fabio is a gifted boy who learns things so easily. From a great concern he is now been identified as one of the most talented child in the Kindergarten.

SOS HERMANN GMEINER PRIMARY SCHOOL, BENGUELA

The school opened in September 2006 to support the development of our programme children as well as the deprived members of the surrounding community. Beginning with 100 students from grade 1 to grade 4 and depending entirely on the SOS finance support, the school gradually grew to the extent of reaching 823 students in 2012 with education services rendered from grades 1 to 9. The school offers an acceptable instructional program that meets individual needs in a positive, safe school. Since 2006, the Herman Gmeiner School has continued to hold close the philosophy that our school is a semi-public school but with a much higher standard than the average government educational institution where a practical studies in computer literacy, home economics and agriculture are non-existent. In addition, our committed and trained school leadership staff makes a difference in the way school is managed.
With each new school year, parents feel confident that staff members will continue to ensure that every child is always challenged academically. The school is well known in Benguela town for the excellent achievement of an average 75% passing rate over the last 4 years. However, staff members need to be continuously trained and challenged into being more child centred, collaborative, and flexible.

Due to the school recognition by the local authorities, the government started paying the salaries of 21 teachers out of the total number of 27 teachers currently working in the school. This removed an enormous weight from our national budget thus allowing the school reach 98 non fee paying children in 2012. Lobbies continue to be made for the government to fully cover all school running costs enabling us to finally exercise free education to all children, a government policy.

In terms of support to our target group children, the school is boasting about the academic achievements made by Evaristo Satumbo, a 12 years old boy who was admitted in the SOS Village when he was 5. Evaristo was enrolled in grade 2 lacking basic language and literacy skills as he could not read and write at basic level. He was given extra support in form of additional remedy sessions where the meanings of letters had to be reintroduced to him before exposing him to more complicated material. Soon he begun to develop his analytical abilities even further and became better story writer and reader as he learnt to read and write basic sentences and short narratives. Evaristo has succeeded with distinction in his following academic years and his exceptional reading abilities makes the school and the Village team to always use him to read speeches to the public in special events.

**MEDICAL CENTRE, BENGUELA**

For more than 4 years, the SOS Medical Centre has struggled to provide meaningful health care services to the SOS program beneficiaries and its surrounding neighborhoods, especially families who might not otherwise have access to medical services. The task of running a Medical Centre as an additional and very specialized service to the SOS Children’s Village in Benguela was somewhat daunting for the young national leadership. The realization of weak support systems and structures inside the provincial health sector was particularly disappointing to our plans to have the Centre run by the government. In addition, failed attempts to identify a long-term committed international healthcare NGO in Angola interested in supporting left the team with no other option than have to accept challenge and ultimately roll up our sleeves and do the work ourselves. The Centre opened 2 years after the starting of SOS Village operations in 2005 witnessing almost no significant impact to the wider community in the first 2 years. Recently, however, the number of services provided has grown from 900 in 2007 to nearly 10,000 service visits in 2012. This year the program expanded further to attach a clinical laboratory out of a converted kitchen. Although it still needs significant investments in modern laboratory equipment, the Centre can now at least perform tests on incoming patients in very common diseases without having to refer patients to other clinics. The clinic laboratory is part of other special services offered for women and children that include maternal health, prenatal, postpartum and family planning services, all conducted in the converted wards initially meant for in-patient services. 7 government nurses serve as the health care providers.

As part of lobbying to ensuring access in medically underserved areas, the Centre established partnerships for investing in the health care infrastructure to upholding the Centre as an outstanding model for where to provide good quality, cost effective, community-focused health care. Advocacy activities led to agreements with the local government authorities translated in its engagement in paying of the nurses’ salaries and in donating essential medicines to the Centre. Under the same agreement, 3 general physicians from Cuba continue to come twice a week to service the population with a wide range of health service in the areas of general health practice, stomatology and pediatrics. The expectation is for the government to be further involved in supporting the centre’s running costs which will allow it to continue developing easy access to health care services and educating patients to improve overall well-being.
**FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, BENGUELA**

The program is servicing a total number of 212 children living in 55 families of origin which are predominantly single mother headed (27) and grandmother headed (9). The program is witnessing rapid reduction on welfare support with the implementation of a micro credit program that provides financial and business services to unemployed family beneficiaries, hoping they will manage to generate self-employment and income and return the loan that then circulates among other microcredit borrowers.

Among the reported successes we chose to tell the Guilhermina Flora family story, a widow with 4 children. They were a very poor war refugee family who settled in Benguela in 2002 in a modest house belonging to one of her husband’s relatives. The breadwinner’s passing away brought misery to the family. What’s worse, the husband’s relatives soon claimed the house leaving the family totally homeless. She had no other alternative than to build a quick house next to the sea made of sticks of twigs for support and with dried grass stuck onto the top to make a covering. This was their very risky family dwelling until the program found her in 2010. Taking advantage of existing opportunities for selling fish and miscellaneous consumable items in the street, she applied for a microcredit financial support and received AKZ 36,000 (USD 360) interest free loan that led to good increase in her income. She successfully returned the loan and managed to build a still modest but safer 2-room house. The family feels more secure in the new accommodation and was also recently removed from the food parcels as she is now able to provide the meals for the children out of the business income. The children attend a local government school and the program continues to support them with education material and free health assistance in our SOS Medical Centre. The four children look healthy and happy due to the parental skills the care giver received from the program.

Two other initiatives have also become opportunity for rapid family development towards self-sufficiency namely, the well-established agriculture initiative and the Kawango social Centre. The former is an initiative that groups 6 family beneficiaries who are effectively utilizing the fertile land within the Hermann Gmeiner School yard, a reserved area for further developments. The 3 hectare plot was carefully prepared by a tractor kindly borrowed from the local agriculture department that also provided maize seeds and training for free. The land is irrigated with the recycled water coming from the Village sewage pond. The agriculture crops site now provides a wonderful view but more than that is the nutrition elements families are being able to bring to their children’s meals. This attainment also allowed the program coordination to move the families to another stage of their development by removing them as food parcel beneficiaries.

The Kawango social Centre on the other hand became an opportunity when a local NGO invited the SOS Children Village in Benguela to use their abandoned community building after difficulties they were experiencing when attempting to implement a HIV/AIDS outreach program financed by the local corporate. The Family Strengthening Program managed to partner with Odebrecht, a Brazilian construction engineering company running many projects in Angola who owns a very meaningful social responsibility program to fight poverty. From the corporate investment the house was totally rehabilitated and training components were added in the areas of material recycling, sewing, art & craft and the making of mobile kiosks. The later initiative is particularly interesting as Odebrecht promised to grant beneficiaries a kiosk full of consumable items worth USD 500 for them to initiate a own retailing business. We can find a small training room inside the center where parental skills training and public health seminars are conducted by our SOS staff. This poverty reduction program aligns perfectly with the strengthening of our beneficiary families and is designed to help many others deprived households from the surrounding Kawango community.
SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, HUAMBO

The SOS Children’s Village in Huambo continued to witness a smooth and steady child admission process into our Family Based Care and managed to attain 83% of its maximum capacity filled with children in need of a substitute SOS family in just two years after the commencement of operations in 2010. The rate of 4 child admissions a month is particularly impressive considering the delicateness around the investigative process that leads to children admission. 36 new children found a home in the Village totalling 100 on our care by the end of 2012. Most of the newly admitted children are double orphans with 19% in the category of abandonment by extended family members supposedly for being affected or infected with HIV.

As typical, most of them were subject to a complete neglected and a carefully attention had to be given both physically, intellectually and emotionally. As reported, many grown up children were not accustomed to a normal functional family life and had difficulties to adapt to the routine. Soon however their attitude was changed positively when they began to experience the love around them seen from the carefully prepared meals, from the periodic health visits to the nearby hospital, from the clothes they were asked to choose, from the privilege to be in a formal education and from the various carefully designed developmental activities implemented by our professionals care workers. It is actually through these activities that 10 talented children were identified as particularly gifted for sports. All children were admitted in a local junior football team.

Perhaps the program impact can be better visualised from the occurrences in Dilma’s life (name changed for protection reasons), one of our recently admitted child. Dilma was 1 and ½ years old when she was admitted. Her case was reported by the social welfare authorities as an abandoned baby after her mother passed away from HIV. Dilma was also diagnosed as HIV positive. She was very weak and sick. Mother Lovejoy (name changed) was particularly selected and approached to be the new mother for Dilma. She is a very mature mother with an inborn love and care. Like other SOS mothers, she also successfully completed an in-service training program on HIV education offered in the village. The state of the child inspired very little hope but the village is already accustomed to miracle recoveries and there was therefore also a reason not to lose hope with this case. Disclosure to the mother was crucial to the continuation of HIV care of the child. Death risk was potentially reduced as the mother adhered to treatment and put the child on an extra and very healthy diet. As a result, Dilma looks as a very normal healthy girl and is getting ready to start the Kindergarten next year.

SOS KINDERGARTEN, HUAMBO

In 2012 the SOS Kindergarten in Huambo catered for 106 full time preschool children, 32% of whom were program children, with 5% placed in a scholarship scheme as part of the school outreach support to low income families. After 2 years of existence, the Kindergarten is consolidating its presence in Huambo and a growing number of parents from the wider community also start showing interest in the quality of education we provide. This clearly explains the 56% of the total kindergarten population occupied by fee paying children in 2012. In any case, the kindergarten ensures that priority of access is offered primarily to our program children second by the deprived working families who live in close proximity. This year, before commencing kindergarten activities, all parents were asked to attend an Introduction Session where staff provides information referent to the Kindergarten’s curriculum. This year, communication with the parents was also enhanced through the introduction of the child portfolio. The file is developed with each child during their time at kindergarten, provided a collection of children’s artwork, their literacy and numeracy projects, photographs and kindergarten experiences. This portfolio along with a summative report was presented to children and their family prior to school transition. The parents then had an opportunity to comment on their child’s summative report their reflections of their child’s time at kindergarten.
The kindergarten continues to provide a play-based program in a safe and nurturing environment in order to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of Kindergarten. We had this year our first group of finalists completing a school readiness program. 23 children from the 5 years old group developed a positive self-concept in relation to themselves as learners, their family, their peers and the community, and have had the opportunity to develop the desire to learn.

THE SOS-CAMBIOTE SCHOOL, HUAMBO

During the year 2012 the Cambiote School in Huambo rendered education services to 748 students making it the fastest growing SOS run school in the country, accommodating the highest number of students, and the unique school that was able to open 8 primary school grades over a short period of 3 years. This remarkable difference was possible due to the courageous and committed staff that did not spare energy to explore key partnerships and advocate for a massive enrolment of children whose rights of education were being violated. Of course this effort did not come without a cost. The concerns are the need to gradually decrease the per classroom ratios to reach 35 students per class in 2013 allowing more individualized attention for students by teachers who need to know students and their families well.

The school is trying to overcome the most difficulties to have community members committed to making their schools better. At the commencement of 2012 the Annual General Meeting was held to elect the parent’s committee for the year. The committee meets together with the Director to discuss topics relevant to the running of the School and to be involved in solution-seeking such as, quality of school homework supervision, student’s attendance, parent’s involvement in school maintenance, and parents’ responsibilities in sex education, just to name some.

In terms of student’s achievements, the 65.4% of passing rate achieved this year is significantly inferior to the rate 79% achieved in the previous. This is partly due to the complexity of the newly introduced grade 8 curriculum and the decrease in remedial teaching at the expense of teacher’s engagement with the load in the mainstream additional classes. In addition, despite government regulations that allow automatic promotion for grades 1, 3 and 5 students, as stated within the education policies, a management decision, in consultation with the parents, was taken to apply the repetition practice with a group of newly enrolled children who could not master the curriculum and thus not reaching certain academic standards. Among the group there were children that did attend any school or were ill prepared in rural state schools.

In 2012 however, the school gave a remarkable step for its development towards a more socio-economic empowering school. With the introduction of the computer literacy and the home-economics classes, the school can now offer students opportunities that well established schools can only dream about. There is a high level of enthusiasm and student participation in these extracurricular activities. Self-esteem among students from deprived households has grown significantly. Although learning sewing skills is not as relevant today as it was in the past, clothing construction skills is still important part of preparing young man and women for occupations related to clothing as well as for household management roles. Computer was fun and the children indicated excellent skills in acquiring. The school aims to use it as a powerful tool in producing students to be prepared and aware of the real world of work.
FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, HUAMBO

As part of its normal growth, 45 new children beneficiaries were added to the program in 2012. The new admission focussed exclusively on the most vulnerable families with children at risk of following into abandonment in which single women headed households represent more than 70%. The admission process continues to unveil a shocking reality of the effects of extreme poverty in the Angolan families and on the children’s rights.

The existing 52 families beneficiaries were serviced in many ways as agreed in their family development plans. Food parcels continued to be widely distributed to ensure some adequate additional nutrition to children while all families got involved in some kind of self-development activities in which the retail selling in informal markets remains predominant. In terms of ensuring the child’s rights to a nationality and education, the program helped 49 children beneficiaries to be granted a poverty certificate which enabled them to have their birth certificate free of any charge. This in turn allowed the children to be enrolled in the SOS supported schools, including the Chicassa community school where 23 program beneficiaries have enrolled. Despite the school enrolment efforts, 16 children from a universe of 155 school aged ones remain outside school due to early pregnancy (3 cases) as well as factors associated with family instability and resistance on the side of some adolescents.

In order to move out of an SOS-led program the management continued to run capacity activities with ANACA, the Community Based Organization (CBO). Program knowledge and administration were the capacity focus. The biggest concern with program rooting rests in the lack of a volunteerism culture among the CBO members making it almost impossible to have an effective supervision of family developmental plans. The management is exploring the possibility of reinforcement in incentives or just increase in the number of hired field officers.

The program regrets the death of Deolinda Cassova, mother and grandmother of 5 children beneficiaries. She was a hard worker who managed to bring security and give a relatively good stability to the children after becoming a widow. She used to be a causal worker doing odd jobs for other community members but with the program support she managed to set up her small business of selling consumable items that allowed her to build a modest but stronger house for the family. Deolinda passed away from a sudden hypertension in December. With the program support, an extended family member was moved in to temporarily look after the children.

Program success with the family development process can also be visualized from achievements in the Domingas Junju Freita’s family. The family was admitted in the program in 2009 when she became a single parent after the desertion of her husband who fled to another province up in the north, leaving her struggling to feed her three young daughters and sheltered in a 2-room mud brick house that was falling apart in the Cambiote community. The pressure upon the caregiver was so much that in the process, her main struggle was to ensure that children had at least one meal a day but relegating other needs as secondary. All hopes for the returning of the husband were shattered when she received the news of his passing away in 2010. She was well below $2 a day income from her seasonal job as hired casual worker in other people’s agriculture plots. As typical, the immediate program intervention was to secure the survival and developmental needs of the children. They received food parcels and building material to improve the shelter. The three children were enrolled in SOS-run education facilities (2 at school and 1 in the Kindergarten). For her development, she requested an interest-free cash loan worth $100-00 that enabled her to start an informal retailing business in the community. She succeeded in returning the loan and business profits allowed her to start equipping her house with a stove and a gas bottle. Program lobbies in 2012 allowed her to be admitted as cleaner in a government school with monthly income of around $150-00 a month. She can now cater alone for three hot meals a day and even managed to add a generator and a TV set to her house. She feels so happy seeing her children progressing well that she decided to give something back to the family strengthening by volunteering as a family development planning supervisor.
SECTION TWO

STATISTICS SUMMARY

(PLEASE SEE THE TWO EXCELL SHEETS ATTACHE)